

INCLUSION OF VIETNAMESE WITH DISABILITIES
Progress Report # 18
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Section 1 – Program Performance Summary

Both components of the current phase of the Inclusion of Vietnamese with Disabilities (IVWD) project, IT Training Program (ITTP) and Parent Association empowerment (PA), have progressed substantially during the third quarter of FY 2011. Van Lang University (VLU) and Hanoi College of Information Technology (HCIT) continue to offer courses in Software Engineering (SE), Graphics Design (GD), Architecture Engineering Design (AED), Website Design for the Hearing Impaired (HI) persons, and Training of Trainers (TOT) for Visually Impaired (VI) persons. **A total of 57 new students were enrolled in ITTP courses during this quarter and 70 students completed their ITTP training.**

The two ITTP schools continued to focus on supporting students with **job placement** and **soft skills** in addition to technical training. Soft skills trainings were facilitated by ITTP teachers and by staff from organizations specialized in soft skills training such as IDEA in Hanoi and VietMinds in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC). During this quarter, **68 graduates have found jobs or internship.** The increase in employment rate of ITTP graduates is especially encouraging. The overall cumulative employment rate for ITTP graduates has increased from 75% in last reporting period to the current rate of 79%, demonstrating that the ITTP program provides quality training in skills prized by employers.

The third quarter of FY 2011 saw continued strengthening of the network of Parent Associations in Quang Nam and Ninh Binh provinces. PAs continued to plan, implement, and monitor community-based activities aimed to promote social and educational inclusion of their children with disabilities (CWD). Activities implemented during this quarter included capacity building trainings for parents and teachers, awareness raising events, home counseling and home-based teaching for children with severe disabilities, and various small grant projects.

This reporting period also witnessed the continued strengthening of linkages among commune level PAs and between PAs and provincial level Disabled Persons' Organizations (DPOs) and government line ministries. Representatives from PAs attended in the **First Annual Sharing and Exchange Conference for Disabled People Organizations and Parents Associations in Danang and in Hanoi.** PAs also organized a **study tour and exchange visit** to Hiep Duc, one of the most experienced district, and parent association in Hoi An.

In the two ethnic minority communes where new PAs were established in last quarter, 70 children were identified by the community to be examined by a team of medical and special education experts to be screened for disability. **The screening exercise confirmed 50 of the identified children have disabilities.** CRS also carried **awareness raising trainings and thematic rehabilitation trainings** for members the ethnic minority PAs. As a result of these trainings and as a result of technical support from PAs in the neighboring Hiep Duc district,

parents of CWD in the two ethnic minority communes have already shown dramatic changes in their attitude and behaviors toward CWD.

Main challenges:

- It is difficult to get in touch with some ITTP graduates after they leave the program and this creates challenges for keeping track of ITTP graduates' employment status. In the future, the schools will create online alumni forum to facilitate keeping in touch with program graduates and also to promote peer-to-peer support among graduates.
- Some heads and vice heads of PAs lacks enthusiasm and hindered the development of their PAs. In some cases, more active PA members replaced the less enthusiastic heads, but in a few PAs, for political and cultural reasons, it is difficult to replace leaders of PAs that are ineffective.
- Members of some remote PAs lack technical skills in using computer and fax machines, making them more dependent on supports from teachers and local government officials. Although this meant that more sectors of the community are involved in parents' activities, but parents' lack of technical skills have slowed activity implementation.

Section 2 – Key Issue Achievement Narrative

Key Issue: Civil Society and Community Mobilization

Narrative:

ITTP schools mobilize support from private sector to support VI students: In this quarter VLU and HCIT were able to mobilize nearly 40 second hand computers from the private sector to equip the VI TOT training courses and to give to poor trainees to take back to their home provinces to start computer labs for at Vietnam Blind Association's provincial branch offices.

PAs mobilize community support for their activities: There was active participation of civil society and community in every aspect of the parent association component of this project. For example each commune Representative Board of Parents Associations (RBPA) is consisted of 60% to 80% of parents of CWD, but also includes members of communal civil societies including Women's Union, Youth Union, Population-Family-Children Unit, healthcare center, and teachers. Civil societies and community members, including parents or direct caregivers of CWD actively involved in mapping CWD in their villages and communes and mobilizing parents of CWD to attend screening and need assessment. The first monthly meeting of RBPA for introducing the project and planning for quarter activities attracted not only members of RBPA but all the parents of CWD in each communes to the meeting.

Key Issue: Local Institutional Capacity Building

Narrative:

TOT for VI empowers the blind community: The TOT for VI persons has supported Vietnam Blind Association (VBA) with 40 IT trainers for their branch offices. Many of them after graduation started working for provincial branch as IT staff and IT trainers. Thus help improve human capacity of local VBA branches. Training classes for VI people have been opened in Bac Ninh, Phu Tho, Tien Giang provinces.

CRS is building capacity of communal PAs to provide needed social services to CWD and their parents and advocate for positive changes in policies and people's attitude toward CWD.

This is achieved through a series of trainings and small grant projects that give PAs opportunities to design and implement innovative interventions to remove barriers faced by CWD for educational and social inclusion.

Section 3 – Program Achievements in FY 2010

Project activities implemented during the third quarter of FY 2011 are described below grouped by strategic objective:

SO1: Youth with disabilities increase access to employment using ICT.

1. ITTP program collaboration with HCIT in Hanoi:

On June 22nd, 12 students graduated from the second TOT training course for VI persons, and 50% of them started to work for provincial VBA branch offices right after graduation. The rest are expected to start working shortly. A third TOT course for VI persons was opened at HCIT with 10 students. This class is expected to graduate in September.

On the same day 24 HI persons graduated from an ITTP course specially tailored to hearing impaired people. In the past ITTP has offered short basic IT courses for people with hearing impairments, this course is more advanced and focused on website design and management skills that are sought for by employers. So far, 15 of the 24 graduates have already found jobs.

HCIT worked closely with IDEA, a Vietnamese NGO, to arrange for 32 ITTP students from to attend IDEA's soft skills training course on job search and interview techniques during four weekend days between May 21st and 29th. At this training, students learned how to write CV and application letters, practiced interview techniques, and heard tips from HR managers from IT companies that will help trainees to make their applications stand out. Trainees felt much more prepared to seek jobs after graduation.

Two more business joined the list of businesses to have recruited HCIT's ITTP graduates. Ms. Nguyen Thi Thu Phuong, graduates from SE4 course find a job as Website Administrator of Hanoi Construction Material and Building Company Ltd., and Hoa Binh Software Solution JSC recruited Ms. Dao Thi Thu Trang to work as Catalogue Design and Development Staff. Ms. Trang graduated from IT General Management course last September where she learnt graphic design and website development skills sought for by her new employer.

An internship program was opened at HCIT for 9 graduates of last year training course. These graduates are from rural areas far from cities where their IT skills are prized. When their initial job search was unsuccessful, they had to move back home for financial reasons. To help these students find jobs, HCIT offered free housing to these 9 graduates, and gave them IT assignments to work on in a simulated work environment and introduced them to businesses. By the end of the quarter, two of them found jobs and HCIT teacher are now working hard to support the rest of the group find jobs before the end of the internship program in early August 2011. The 7 graduates that were still in this internship program are not counted as being employed in the employment status table below.

Pixel Vietnam, a graphic processing company that have hired 7 ITTP graduates last year will offer up to 20 internships to ITTP graduates. The internship is expected to last between 3 and 6 months, and Pixel will support graduates housing and living stipend during internship. After the completion of internship, successful candidates will be able to work from home, receiving and submitting work assignments through email. This arrangement allows PWD from other provinces to be close to their family while working.

2. ITTP at Van Lang University – Ho Chi Minh City

Two new courses (AED, GD) were opened in this quarter at Van Lang University as planned. In total, 21 students joined the new AED course and 26 students joined the new GD course, bring the overall total of students benefited by Van Lang University's ITTP courses to 185 this school year. The GD course is scheduled to end in late August and the AED course will end in September.

During this quarter, ITTP students of Van Lang University had a number of opportunities to participate social events that improve their confidence and social skills. ITTP students participated in the annual student talent competition, a game show type event where participants score points for correctly answering questions. Six (6) ITTP students made it to the final round of the competition, demonstrating to the entire school that students with disabilities are not inferior to non-disabled students.

On April 22nd, ITTP students also met with a group of university students from Hong Kong visiting VLU on an exchange study tour. ITTP students discussed life of people with disabilities in Vietnam and learned about students' life in Hong Kong.

On May 14th, ITTP students participated in the “Nghị Luận Song” event where successful PWD professionals told their life stories to the student body of VLU, including ITTP students. This event was aimed to inspire both disabled and non-disabled students to strive harder in school and in life.

On June 16th, VLU engaged VietMinds Company to provide a one-day workshop for 70 ITTP students with the theme “Dream-Action-Success”. The objective of this training is to improve students' goal setting and action planning skills. After the training, students have clearer vision of their dreams and the steps required to make those dreams come true.

Four VI students graduated from TOT got internship positions (paid) at Bao Ngoc Laptop Company in HCMC. Van Lang University is supporting these students with free housing and use of school computers. After the internship program, these students will move to Bao Ngoc Company if they pass the probation period.

Report on the employment status:

Hanoi College of Information Technology / ESTIH					
Class	Duration	Grad. Date	# Graduates	# Employed	%
SE1	1 year	May-08	27	26	96%
SE2	1 year	Sep-08	25	25	100%
SE3	1 year	May-09	25	23	92%
SE4	1 year	Jul-10	21	14	67%
GEIT	1 year	Jul-10	26	20	77%
HIP	6 month	Jun-11	24	15	63%
TOT VI 1	3 months	Jan-11	14	10	71%
TOT VI 2	3 months	Jun-11	12	6	50%
Total			174	139	80%

Van Lang University

Class	Duration	Grad. Date	# Graduates	# Employed	%
SE1	1 year	Mar-10	24	23	96%
GD1	6 months	Aug-09	22	17	77%
GD2	6 months	Dec-09	22	15	68%
GD3	6 months	Jan-11	30	24	80%
GD4	6 months	Apr-11	12	11	92%
AED1	6 months	Dec-09	22	19	86%
AED2	6 months	Jun-10	20	12	60%
AED3	6 months	Jan-11	18	16	89%
TOT VI 1	3 months	Mar-11	9	5	56%
TOT VI 1	3 months	Jun-11	16	11	69%
Total			195	153	78%

SO2: Children with disabilities benefit from increased involvement of parents in providing community-based support

General disability awareness training

On May 27th and 28th and June 1st and 2nd, two **general disability awareness trainings** were organized for 147 parent association members from Gia Vien and Yen Mo districts. These PA members are those who could not attend the first general disability awareness raising training in November 2010. After the training, parents understood more about disabilities and abilities of their children and understood more about the benefits of inclusive education for their children. In addition to these general disabilities awareness training,

Hearing aids support

During the initial screening organized during the first quarter of FY 2011, 42 children with hearing impairments were identified to receive hearing aids. At end of May, these children **received hearing aids**. Two-day **trainings on using hearing aids for language development** were organized for 116 parents and teachers of children with hearing impairments who received hearing aids. The trainer, Ms. Nguyen Bich Hao, a teacher with 20 years experience teaching children with hearing impairments from Xa Dan Special School for Deaf Children delivered this training. This training was designed to train parents and teachers to teach children with hearing aids in using hearing aids to learn improve their language abilities. The participants found that this training was very practical and the training also helped to improve collaboration between parents and teachers of the children with hearing impairments. These training have opened up the minds of parents and teachers that children with disabilities can be rehabilitated, spurring participants to request additional trainings on sign language and more advanced intervention and rehabilitation techniques for children with hearing impairments.

Ethnic minority communes

Two ethnic minority communes organized a **screening exercise** for 70 children suspected of having disabilities. A team of medical experts and special education teachers examined these children and confirmed **50 of these children have disabilities**. On 22 April, an **awareness raising training** on disability issues were organized for 50 parents and 23 local government officials, including village leaders. Two teachers of Nguyen Dinh Chieu Special School for students with visual impairment and Quang Ngai Special School for CWD facilitated this

training. More experienced parents from neighboring communes of Hiep Duc district also joined the training to share their experience. With almost 100% of the parents of CWD are ethnic minority, who never before discussed disability issues, especially the rights and abilities of people with disabilities, this training acted as an ice-breaker for the minds of parents of CWD. Parents of CWD of these two communes came out of the training having a more positive outlook for the future of their children.

On April 23rd, a thematic **training on care and support for children with intellectual disabilities** was organized for 49 parents and teachers of children with intellectual disabilities. Parents from neighboring communes of Hiep Duc district provided technical support and shared their stories. After the training, parents from the ethnic minority communes informed CRS staff that they have experienced a dramatic change in their knowledge and attitude toward children with intellectual disabilities. Parents used to think that intellectual disabilities are caused by Forest Ghosts and is only treated by worshipping spirits. The enthusiasm in learning new things motivated some core parents in Phuoc Gia and Phuoc Tra to propose small grants for activities to support local CWD during summer vacation.

On June 1st International Children's day, PAs of Phuoc Gia and Phuoc Tra organized the first **awareness raising event** of disabilities issues with the participation of all 50 CWD of both communes. During this event, CWD had singing and drawing contests. For many of ethnic minority children, this was the first social community event they attended. Many were very shy. This event was the first step for behavior change, not only for the children themselves but also for parents and other community members. Parents of Phuoc Gia and Phuoc Tra plan to organize additional social activities and awareness raising events in the future including during school breaks and for Mid-Autumn Festival.

Home-based services

During this quarter, core parents of PAs who were trained in counseling and rehabilitation techniques continued to make home visits to offer **home-based counseling** to 261 other parents of children with disabilities. Through these one-on-one sessions, core parents pass on their knowledge of how to care and support CWD to other parents. Core teachers continued to provide **home-based teaching** to 81 children with severe disabilities who cannot attend inclusive classes. Many parents and teachers who are involved in this activity are very happy to share about children's progress, especially in communication interaction skills with other parents during the quarterly meetings for all members of PAs. Some children have made extraordinary progress. Trinh Thi Thuan in Hiep Duc with support from her teacher over the last 2 years is now continuing her education at home following third grade curriculums.

Small grant projects

PAs have designed and are implementing 30 small grant projects. Each small grant project received about \$200 to \$500 in funding. Small grant projects included initiatives that aim to improve CWD's life skills (cooking class, electricity safety class), improve CWD's social inclusion (singing and dancing classes), and teaching parents of CWD skills to better take care of their children (making chairs specially designed for children with cerebral palsy). Many PAs were able to mobilize local in-kind contribution to complement financial support from the project. For example, the cooking class project of Que Xuan commune received cooking utensils and cookers from local government. In addition to providing services for CWD, small grant projects also help PAs improve their organizational skills and build broad support for CWD from all sectors of the community. For example, members of Women's Union, Youth Union and local schools took part in the small grant projects as judges for CWD's cooking contest.

Strengthening linkages

This reporting period also witnessed networking activities of all 40 PAs in Quang Nam and Ninh Binh provinces. In April, PA representatives participated in **regional DPO conferences** in Danang and in Hanoi. At these conferences, PA members met with more than 200 participants representing different DPOs, PAs and government officials. These regional conferences represented the first step in creating regional and national DPO network that more effectively will advocate for issues important to people with disabilities.

On June 20th, 2011, Hiep Duc Project Management Board hosted an **exchange workshop** for 64 PA representatives from Yen Mo, Gia Vien (Ninh Binh), Que Son, Thang Binh and Hiep Duc districts. The following day, the PA delegation had an **exchange visit** to Hoi An Parents Club and Hoi An Organization of Youth with Disabilities. At both exchange workshops, parents had opportunities to report on their success in supporting CWD, share lessons learnt on how they can work better to sustain the associations.

Section 4 – Indicator Results and Targets

According to guidance from USAID, this table includes only **new** beneficiaries in FY 2011. Continuing beneficiaries, such as ITTP students who began their courses in FY 2010 or children with disabilities enrolled due to the CRS project at preschool, primary and secondary levels in Ninh Binh and Quang Nam, are not included here.

Standard Indicators	<i>FY 11 Q1-3</i>	<i>FY 11 Target</i>
1. Number of people benefiting from USG-supported social services	1394	1620
# of students with disabilities enrolled in long term ITTP training in Hanoi	5 ¹	50
# of students with disabilities enrolled in long term ITTP training in HCMC	91 ²	100
# of students with disabilities enrolled in short term ITTP training in Hanoi and HCMC	107 ³	150
# of students enrolled in inclusive IT classes	3	20
# of CWD receive quality community support	1188 ⁴	1300
¹ During Q4 of FY2010, 48 students were enrolled in long term ITTP training in Hanoi. An additional 5 students joined the on-going classes during Q1/FY2011, bring the total to 53. ² During Q4 of FY2010, 77 students were enrolled in long term ITTP training in Hanoi. An additional 91 students joined during FY2011, bring the total to 168. ³ During Q4 of FY2010, 10 students were enrolled in short term ITTP training. An additional 107 students joined FY2011, bring the total to 117. ⁴ Fifty (50) additional CWD were screened and confirmed as having disabilities in two remote communes of minority ethnic groups during this quarter, bringing the total number of CWD beneficiaries to 1188.		
	<i>FY 11 Q1-3</i>	<i>FY 11 Target</i>
2. Number of service providers trained who serve vulnerable persons	2344	2600

# of PA members trained in awareness raising and rehabilitation techniques	998	390
# of parents and caretakers participating in PA activities	1346	2210
	<i>FY 11 Q1-3</i>	<i>FY 11 Target</i>
3. Number of USG-assisted organizations and service delivery systems strengthened who serve vulnerable populations	28	36
# of new businesses involved in job placement of ITTP graduates in Hanoi and HCMC	2	10
# of new Parent Associations established	26	26

Section 5 – Reporting on People with Disabilities

- 1. Please describe ways in which your organization has removed barriers to the participation of PWDs in your work. Barriers may include communications, physical accessibility, employment, civil society/governance, training, etc.*

CRS recruits PWD with specific profession and skills for consultancy services whenever availability. For instance, Hoang Van Giap, an ITTP graduate from HCIT were recruited in software development for data input and analysis of the results of the screening and need assessments of 1505 children in Quang Nam and Ninh Binh. ITTP graduate students were often informed by CRS staff for any vacant in the INGOs network.

CRS is supporting ITTP schools in training visually impaired people to use text-to-speech software to help them use computers. Trainees of this program will return to their home provinces and train other visually impaired people in using computers. Through the use of computers and modern communication technologies such as mobile phones and the internet, visually impaired people have more opportunities access information and more options of employment.

- 2. Please describe how PWDs have been included in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of USAID-supported programs.*

CRS currently employs three PWD out of a total of 30 staff and long-term consultants (10%).

In one training on project and activity planning, management, social mobilization for parents, teachers and community members, CRS worked with Ninh Binh DOET to invite Ninh Binh DPO to co-organize training. The chairperson of Ninh Binh DPO came and shared his experience with parents. This was also an opportunity for Ninh PA to have linkage and connection to the provincial DPO.

Mr. Trinh Xuan Vinh, a person with physical disabilities and a parent of a child with multiple disabilities (cerebral palsy and intellectual disability), head of youth with disabilities self-help group in Hoi An were invited to join the training workshops on awareness raising on disability issues for 196 parents of children with intellectual with

disabilities in Thang Binh district. As a person experienced the similar situation with other parents of CWD, and as a member of Quang Nam DPO and Hoi An DPO and Hoi An Club of Parents with CWD, Mr. Vinh brought to the training workshops message of positive behavior change in the society towards people and children with disabilities, the government and provincial policies relating to PWD and the knowledge and skills of how to take care of a child with disabilities, how to mobilize the other parents of CWD for the regular and effective operation of parent associations. His sharing at the awareness raising workshop received the attention and positive feedback of parents of CWD, opening further cooperation and partnership between Hoi An Club of Parents of CWD and Thang Binh and Que Son PAs in the future.

3. *How your organization engages in activities that include the goal of increasing the capacity of disabled people's organizations or parent organizations to provide assistance to, and advocate successfully for, the rights of PWDs? Please provide specific examples.*

CRS has organized capacity building trainings in needs assessment, project design and management and fundraising for PA members. Through small grant projects PA members put their learning to practice by writing proposals for activities that address needs identified by themselves. CRS and its partners at district levels, schools helped and provided supports and consultations for them to revise all their proposals. After approval, PA members practice project management by implementing their proposals.

CRS has provided awareness training to PA members that increased parents' knowledge of the rights of people (and children) with disabilities. CRS has also supported parents to organize awareness raising events in their communities to promote social and educational inclusion for children with disabilities.

After the successful establishment of 26 new PAs in the previous reporting period and two more new PAs during this reporting period, core members of these PAs were selected for capacity building in community development, fund raising skills and project management and consultation skills. Besides core parents of the 10 existing PAs in Hiep Duc, who already provide assistance to the families of children with disabilities over the last 1 year, these new core parents have learned about advocacy for the education and care for their children at the community through small grant projects which focus on the increasing of inclusion of CWD in the community.

CRS supported the organization of two regional exchange workshops that brought PA and DPO representatives together with government ministry officials, giving them opportunities to tell government officials directly the day-to-day challenges faced by PWD and the shortcomings of policy implementation.